

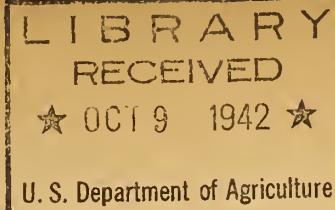
## **Historic, Archive Document**

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1946  
C762

Reserve



CONSUMER TIME

R-63

NETWORK: NBC

DATE: September 12, 1942

ORIGINATION: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM-EST

Produced by Consumers' Counsel Division of the Department of Agriculture  
and presented in cooperation with United States Government  
agencies working for consumers.

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER . . RINGS TWICE . . CLOSE DRAWER.
2. WOMAN: That's your money buying food.
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.
4. MAN: That's your money paying for a home.
5. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.
6. WOMAN: That's your money buying clothes.
7. MAN: Buying you a living in wartime.
8. SOUND: CASH REGISTER . . CLOSE DRAWER.



9. MONTGOMERY: Hello. This is Don Montgomery, your Consumers' Counsel in the Department of Agriculture at Washington. We've got some important facts for you today about that food you pay so much of your money for..... facts about beef.

10. FREYMAN: Beef! I've almost forgotten what real good beef tastes like, Mr. Montgomery.

11. MONTGOMERY: I know - it's pretty scarce - especially in the eastern part of the country.

12. FREYMAN: You know a neighbor of mine bought some the other day, but she might better have gone without..... Mr. Montgomery - how can we know what we're getting when we spend money for meat?

13. MONTGOMERY: Well, that's just exactly what our consumer reporter is going to tell you. He's been out scouting for the facts. Johnny - want to come over here and report?

14. JOHN: (FADING IN) Sure thing. Just what was the matter, Mrs. Freyman, with that meat your neighbor bought?

15. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny - that meat was pretty important to her. You probably know someone like this neighbor of mine - a woman who has a service flag hanging in her window, and who sits by that window every day waiting for a letter with the word "free" instead of a stamp in the upper right-hand corner. And then one day - that letter comes!



16. MOTHER: (ON CUE. FADING IN, EXCITED) Sally! Sally - a letter from Jim!

17. SALLY: That's he say, Mother?

18. MOTHER: I don't know ---

19. SOUND: ENVELOPE TEARING.

20. MOTHER: Now, where are my glasses ---? Here - here, you read it, Sally -

21. SALLY: All right - "Dear Mom ---" He writes just as scrawly as ever.

22. MOTHER: Go on ---

23. SALLY: "Sorry I didn't write sooner, but we been pretty busy here at camp these last few weeks. Don't worry that anything's the matter with me. I'm in the pink. You should see me pack in the grub. And the swell meals we get! Steak for dinner last night ---"

24. MOTHER: Steak ---! I hardly ever was able to buy that for him.

25. SALLY: "It sure tasted swell. But now for the big news..... I'm coming home!"

26. MOTHER: What?

27. SALLY: "I'll get there next Monday - for a furlough."

28. MOTHER: Sally!



29. SALLY: Isn't that wonderful?

30. MOTHER: Jim! Jim's coming home!

31. SALLY: Let's see what else he says.... "after that, we leave for - for..."

32. MOTHER: Sally - what's the matter?

33. SALLY: He - he's coming home to say goodby.

34. MOTHER: Goodby!

35. SALLY: This is his last furlough - before he sails.

36. MOTHER: Oh.....

37. SALLY: Mother ---!

(PAUSE)

38. MOTHER: We must make his stay at home here the happiest time he's ever known - so's he can remember it when he's gone.

39. SALLY: Yeah - I - I suppose that's right.

40. MOTHER: Sure it's right. We'll fix all the things he likes best to eat. We - I'll tell you what we'll do! We'll have steak for his first dinner home!

41. SALLY: Steak! We can't afford ---

42. MOTHER: (DEFENSIVELY) I guess we can have steak this once if we want to.



43. SALLY: How we going to pay for it?

44. MOTHER: Oh, I got a little money saved up. Now, come on - we got work to do - 'fore Jim comes marching home.

(PAUSE)

45. FREYMAN: (ON CUE) So Jim's Mother got ready for the big event. House all slicked up. But the grand surprise, of course, was to be that steak. She cooked it carefully - guarded it from Jim's eyes ---

46. JIM: (FADING IN) Gee whillikins, Mom - won't you even give me a little peek at what's in the stove? If my smaller's right ---

47. MOTHER: No - you sit down there to the table - with Sally.

48. SALLY: (OFF) Come on, Jim.

49. JIM: (TURNING OFF) Aw, gee ---!

50. MOTHER: I'll bring the meat.

51. SOUND: OVEN DOOR OPENING. PANS, ETC.

52. JIM: (OFF) Smells like steak!

53. MOTHER: Well - what do you think of the looks?

54. JIM: (FADING IN) It is! Boy, oh boy!

55. MOTHER: Look as good as the steak at camp?

56. JIM: Yeah. It's a big one but... Didn't this cost an awful lot?



57. SALLY: Well, you see, Jim ---

58. MOTHER: (QUICKLY) Now, never mind. Jim's on leave, and we're not going to talk about money.

59. JIM: Steak ---! Gee, this family must have struck oil!

60. SOUND: STEAK SERVED.

61. MOTHER: Think you can eat a piece this big?

62. JIM: Just let me at it.

63. MOTHER: All right - here you are.

64. SOUND: PLATE SET DOWN.

65. JIM: Boy, oh boy ---!

66. MOTHER: (EAGERLY) Go right ahead, son.

67. SOUND: KNIFE AND FORK - TRYING TO CUT THROUGH STEAK.

68. MOTHER: (ON CUE) What's the matter? Is it tough?

69. JIM: (GENTLY) Guess this knife just ain't sharp enough.

70. SALLY: That's right - I forgot to sharpen it. I'll go get ---

71. JIM: No - 's okay. I got a bite off here ---

72. MOTHER: (AFTER PAUSE) How does it taste?

73. JIM: (TRYING TO MEAN IT) Swell. (CHEWING HARD) Tastes swell.

74. MOTHER: Oh Jim. It is tough.... Isn't it?



75. JIM: (CHUCKING) Well - maybe a little.

76. MOTHER: And the butcher said that was the best steak he had. Land knows I paid enough for it. And believe me, I'm going to give that man a piece of my mind!

77. JIM: Don't worry, Mom. This is all right. It tastes swell. Really it does.

(PAUSE)

78. FREYMAN: But it wasn't all right, Johnny. That tough steak cost Jim's Mother a lot of disappointment. I felt so sorry for her.

79. JOHN: Well, Mrs. Freyman you've heard of Federal grades stamped right on the meat - haven't you?

80. FREYMAN: Yes, of course I've heard of them - time and again - on this program.

81. JOHN: Well, that's about the only way you can be absolutely sure you're getting the grade of meat you want - the grade you're paying for. By looking at the U. S. grade mark, stamped the whole length of the carcass.

82. FREYMAN: But I don't think our butcher carries any U.S. grades. So how can we tell what we're getting?

83. JOHN: Well, in the case of beef and veal, you can get graded meat - whatever butcher shop you patronize. But I'll explain about that later. Right now I want to be sure you understand about Government grades on meat - and how they'll help you get what you're paying for.



84. FREYMAN: I wish you would, Johnny. I never realized before how terribly important those meat grades are.

85. JOHN: You know that the Government won't buy anything else but U. S. graded meat.

86. FREYMAN: Oh.

87. JOHN: For our armed forces and the allies. They want to be sure they know what they're getting.

88. FREYMAN: Well, why isn't all meat marked with U. S. grades?

89. JOHN: Because there's never been a law saying meat must be graded. Packing companies have their meat graded by Government experts when their customers demand it - some retail stores do and many hotels and restaurants and the Government always buys that way.

90. FREYMAN: Well, just how is this U. S. grading done, Johnny?

91. JOHN: The Government grader goes to the plant and examines the carcasses - beef, veal, pork, lamb, mutton, and stamps on them a purple grade mark.

92. FREYMAN: Oh - a little round purple thing?

93. JOHN: No - that round stamp just means that the meat has been inspected for cleanliness - that it's healthy and wholesome. You can tell grade and quality by the long purple ribbon stamp ---

94. FREYMAN: A ribbon stamp?



95. JOHN: We call it that because it's printed in a long strip. You see, the type is on a roller that prints the letters U.S. and then the grade - like U.S. Good or U.S. Choice - over and over again, the whole length of the carcass. The advantage of this ribbon stamp is that practically any cut of meat you'd buy in a store will have at least a bit of the U.S. grade stamp on it.

96. FREYMAN: Saying "U.S."..... And then what's the name of the grade?

97. JOHN: Well, that depends. The very tip-top quality of meat is called "U.S. Prime," but there's little of that.

98. FREYMAN: Well then what's next best?

99. JOHN: "U.S. Choice." That's almost as scarce as "U.S. Prime," but you may find it in your butcher shops.

100. FREYMAN: How is it different from "U.S. Prime," Johnny?

101. JOHN: Oh, a little less tender and juicy. You and I probably couldn't even tell the difference - till we sank our teeth into it. It takes an expert to grade meat by looking at it. That's why you need the U. S. grade stamp - for a signpost.

102. FREYMAN: I see. And what are the lower grades called, Johnny?

103. JOHN? The next one down, after Prime and Choice - and it isn't low grade at all - is called "U.S. Good." It really is Good - good enough for my money any day, but



you know - less of my money than I'd pay for choice grade

104. FREYMAN: U. S. Prime - U. S. Choice - and U. S. Good.

105. JOHN: Yes, and then come U. S. Commercial, and U. S. Utility.

106. FREYMAN: What are those grades like?

107. JOHN: They're just as nourishing - pound for pound of lean meat - as the upper grades. Even the lowest Government grade - U. S. Utility - can be made into a tasty dish by long, slow, cooking, and good seasoning.

108. FREYMAN: Then - by looking for Government grades - people with small budgets may be able to fit more meat into their menus.

109. JOHN: That's right. The big advantage of Government grades is that you get what you're paying for. If you're charged for Good grade meat, you get good grade. You can be sure of that when the "U. S. Good" is stamped right on it.

110. FREYMAN: Well, now, Johnny - back there somewhere, you said that no matter what butcher shop I go into - whether they sell U.S. graded meat or not - I can get graded beef and veal.

111. JOHN: That's right. You see, the Government has passed a regulation saying that all beef and veal must be graded - if not by the Government graders, then by the meat packers themselves.



112. FREYMAN: By the packers .... You mean that if they don't have Government experts grade their beef and veal, then they're supposed to do it themselves?

113. JOHN: Yes, they're required to grade it, and they're supposed to do their grading according to Government standards.

114. FREYMAN: Well, will it say "U. S. Good" - and so forth - same as the Government-graded meat?

115. JOHN: No, the grade the packer puts on does not say "U. S." and it's not stamped in a long ribbon.

116. FREYMAN: Not U. S.? What does it say then?

117. JOHN: It's a single letter - A, B, or C - stamped here and there on the side of beef. So that you might happen to see the grade letter on the cut you buy - or you might not.

118. FREYMAN: And - if I saw an "A" - I'd know that was Prime beef?

119. JOHN: No. An "A" - in the grading the packer does - corresponds to "U.S. GOOD."

120. FREYMAN: "A" is "Good" grade? Then what letter is used for Prime or Choice, which is better than A?



121. JOHN: Well, Prime or Choice beef and veal from now on will be marked with the U.S. Government ribbon stamp. And the words "U.S. Prime" or "U.S. Choice" will be on it. In case a Government Grader isn't available, the packer marks those top grades AA.

122. FREYMAN: (ANNOYED) But Johnny - two kinds of grading, two ways of marking beef, and grade A isn't first - it's 2nd. or 3rd. or something.... This all sounds pretty confusing to me.

123. JOHN: It is confusing - even to me. That's why we've had a Consumer Tips card printed up, with all the information you and I need when we go buying beef.

124. FREYMAN: You mean - how the packers' grading differs from the U. S. Government grading - and how the ABC's correspond to the "U.S. Good," and so on?

125. JOHN: That's right. All the facts you need.

126. FREYMAN: And I can get one just by writing in to our Consumers' Counsel?

127. JOHN: That's right. Isn't it, Mr. Montgomery?



128. MONTGOMERY: Yes, we've had several thousand copies printed - hoping you will all write in for them. Because it's important right now that you understand the rules set up to protect you when you buy beef. Maybe you noticed - in the papers last week - that the Government had accused a hundred and fifteen meat packers of overcharging for the beef they sold.

129. FREYMAN: Yes, I did read something about that.

130. MONTGOMERY: Well, one way they overcharged, according to the Government, was by marking the wrong letter on the beef. They'd mark an "A" on beef that was below U. S. Good quality.

131. FREYMAN: You mean - we'd be paying for U. S. Good grade, but getting U. S. Commercial?

132. MONTGOMERY: Yes, that's it - and the Government claims that Good grade was being sold as Choice, and at the higher price.

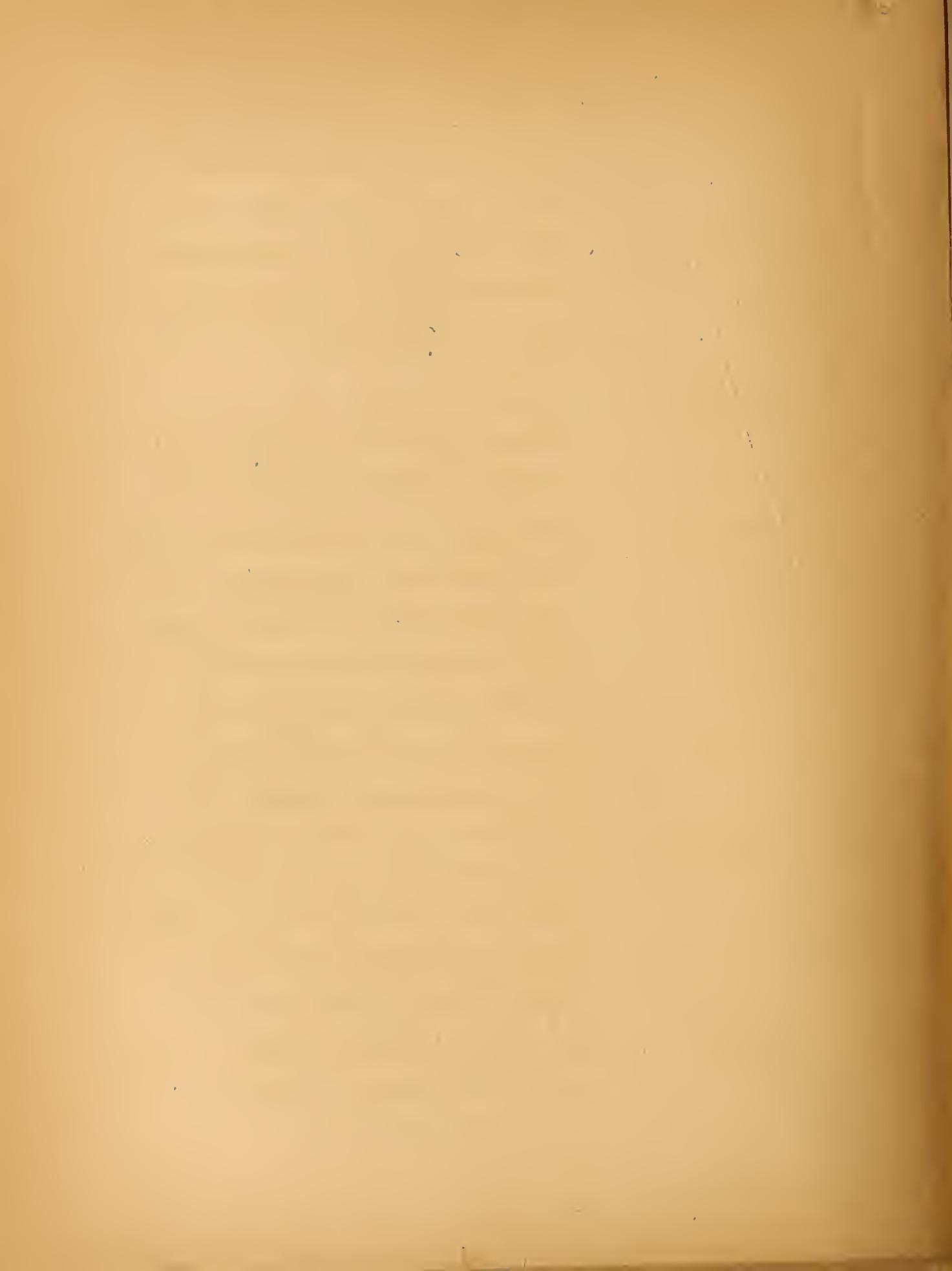
133. FREYMAN: Well, why doesn't the Government step in and grade all meat?



134. MONTGOMERY: I wish they could, but you know the Government graders are pretty busy right now taking care of the meat that goes to our fighting forces and our Allies. But they are going to grade as much of Choice beef and veal as they can. And they're going to check up on the packers' grading of the lower qualities too.

135. FREYMAN: Then - actually - all beef and veal will be either graded or checked by Government experts.

136. MONTGOMERY: No, not all. Practically all of the Choice will be Government graded, but the lower grades will be checked - not every single carcass - just one here and another there. Now, here's something else you should know, Mrs. Freyman, - just because a Government expert has checked the packers' grading doesn't mean that the meat is Government graded. Shouldn't be advertised that way either. Even your butcher may get confused about that. For instance, his ad in the paper has things mixed up if it says: "Government graded beef - Grade A," or "U.S. Grade A beef." If meat is Government graded, it must have the "U.S. Good" - or whatever the grade name is - stamped right on it. And



if it has an A or a B or a C grade, the letters "U.S." shouldn't be used and it should not be called Government graded beef.

137. FREYMAN: Then I must watch to see whether the beef and veal I buy has the Government ribbon stamp - or an A, B, or C.

138. MONTGOMERY: You should watch but - you see the order says the A, B, or C grade must be on the beef when it's sold to your butcher but - unfortunately - it need not be on there when it's sold to you. He may trim the A, B, or C grade stamp off before you see it. It isn't run right across the meat like the U.S. grade mark is.

139. FREYMAN: Well, if the letter doesn't show, how can we tell what grade we're getting?

140. MONTGOMERY: Well, you can ask him. You're entitled to know what grade of meat you're getting. And your butcher can show you the grade stamp on that beef or veal.

141. FREYMAN: Then - first, I should keep my eyes open for that long purple ribbon stamp marked with U. S. grades....

142. MONTGOMERY: That's right.



143. FREYMAN: And then - if my butcher doesn't carry U.S. graded meat - I should ask to see an A, a B, or a C on beef or veal before I buy a piece of it.

144. MONTGOMERY: Right. And if you do see either a B or C - I wish you'd write and tell me. Frankly, I haven't seen anything less than A in the butcher shops I've been in. Somehow the B's and C's just disappear.

145. FREYMAN: Well, I'll ask to see B and C grades of beef and veal. And - if I find any - I'll let you know.

146. MONTGOMERY: Good. You know, I'm sorry this whole subject of meat grading is so confusing, but that's just the way it is. So do write for the Tips card.

147. FREYMAN: I'll write in for it today - to the Consumers' Counsel - Department of Agriculture - Washington, D. C.

148. MONTGOMERY: And be sure to tell us your own name and address and the call letters of your radio station.

149. FREYMAN: All right. And now, Mr. Montgomery - I'd like to make a request for next week's CONSUMER TIME.



150. MONTGOMERY: What's that?

151. FREYMAN: I'd like to know - and I think 'most every other mother in this country would like to know too -- just what we should have in our medicine cabinets, in case of emergencies.

152. MONTGOMERY: Then I'll have Johnny talk to the health experts in the Government, and we'll have the facts ready for you by next Saturday.

153. FREYMAN: Thank you - for all your facts.

154. ANNOUNCER: And listen in next Saturday - same time, same station - for facts on medicine chests. But first - right away - today - how about your copy of the Consumer Tips on grades of beef and cal? We have one here for you - free - if you'll just write and ask us for it. Tips that will save you dollars - for the penny postal you write in. Don't forget to put your own name and address on it, will you? And the call letters of the station to which you are listening. We'll send your Tips card right out - so you can know what you're getting when you put good money into a piece of beef.

Heard on today's program were: Evelyn



Freyman, Frances Adams, Helen Goodhue,  
Harold Stepler, and Consumers' Counsel,  
Donald Montgomery and your announcer Ken  
Banghart.

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